AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 33-39 without prejudice or disclaimer, and amend Claims 27-31, 40-43 and 45 as follows:

Claims 1-23 (canceled)

Claim 24 (previously presented): An automatic hand-supportable laser scanning bar code reading system comprising:

a first omni-directional bar code reading mode of operation, wherein a visible omni-directional laser scanning pattern produces multiple laser scanning lines having substantially uniform spatial and temporal intensity characteristics in any given scanning plane for the purpose of scanning and reading bar code symbols; and

a second uni-directional bar code reading mode of operation, wherein against a visible stroboscopically-pulsed omni-directional laser scanning pattern, there is produced a single laser scanning line having substantially uniform spatial and temporal intensity characteristics in any given scanning plane for the purpose of scanning and reading bar code symbols.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The automatic hand-supportable laser scanning bar code reading system of claim 24, wherein different methods can be used to generated such different types of omni-directional laser scanning patterns in respective bar code reading modes of operation.

Claim 26 (previously presented): The automatic hand-supportable laser scanning bar code reading system of claim 24, wherein both (i) the visible omni-directional scanning pattern of substantially uniform spatial and temporal intensity, and (ii) the visible stroboscopically-pulsed omni-directional laser scanning pattern having a single line laser scanning line of substantially uniform spatial and temporal intensity, are generated in respective modes of operation by electronically controlling a single laser scanning beam and its photo-reception.

Claim 27 (currently amended): An automatically-activated bar code symbol reading device comprising:

a bar code symbol reading mechanism contained within a hand-supportable housing and which is capable of operating in two different bar code reading modes, namely:

in a first bar code reading mode, the bar code symbol reading mechanism automatically generates an visible omni-directional ~~visible~~ laser scanning pattern of substantially uniform spatial and temporal intensity for repeatedly reading one or more bar code symbols on an object during a bar code symbol reading cycle, and automatically generating a new symbol character data string in response to each bar code symbol read thereby;

in a second bar code reading mode, the bar code symbol reading mechanism automatically generates a visible stroboscopically-pulsed omni-directional laser scanning pattern having a single laser scanning line of substantially uniform spatial and temporal intensity for repeatedly reading one or more bar code symbols on an object during a bar code symbol reading cycle, and automatically generating a new symbol character data string in response to each bar code symbol read thereby.

Claim 28 (currently amended): The automatically-activated laser scanning bar code symbol reading device of claim ~~27~~ 30, wherein the bar code symbol reading mechanism automatically enters the first "omni-directional" reading mode when the hand-supportable housing is placed in a support stand ~~(that supports the housing)~~ that supports the housing, and automatically enters the second "single-line" reading mode when the hand-supportable housing is removed from the support stand, or alternatively, when removed from the support stand and the user depresses the data activation switch/trigger switch mounted external to the hand-supportable housing.

Claim 29 (currently amended): The automatically-activated bar code symbol reading device of claim ~~27~~ 30, wherein said hand-supportable housing further comprises a manually-actuatable data transmission control ~~(activation)~~ activation switch that is capable of producing a control activation signal that enables communication of symbol character data ~~(produced by the bar code symbol reading system)~~ produced by the bar code symbol reading system to a host system in an automatic manner.

Claim 30 (currently amended): ~~The~~ An automatically-activated bar code symbol reading device ~~of claim 27~~, comprising:

a bar code symbol reading mechanism contained within a hand-supportable housing and which is capable of operating in two different bar code reading modes, namely:

in a first bar code reading mode, the bar code symbol reading mechanism automatically generates an visible omni-directional ~~visible~~ laser scanning pattern of substantially uniform spatial and temporal intensity for repeatedly reading one or more bar code symbols on an object during a bar code symbol reading cycle, and automatically generating a new symbol character data string in response to each bar code symbol read thereby;

in a second bar code reading mode, the bar code symbol reading mechanism automatically generates a visible stroboscopically-pulsed omni-directional laser scanning pattern having a single laser scanning line of substantially uniform spatial and temporal intensity for repeatedly reading one or more bar code symbols on an object during a bar code symbol reading cycle, and automatically generating a new symbol character data string in response to each bar code symbol read thereby;

wherein said hand-supportable housing further comprises a manually-actuatable data transmission control ~~(activation)~~ activation switch that is capable of serving dual purposes, namely: (i) producing a control activation signal that enables communication of symbol character data ~~(produced by the bar code symbol reading system)~~ produced by the bar code symbol reading system to a host system in an automatic manner, as well as (ii) enabling the manually-selection of the bar code mode reading modes supported by the system, in response to preprogrammed conditions determined by an automatic IR-enabled object detection subsystem embodied within said hand-supportable housing.

Claim 31 (currently amended): The automatically-activated laser scanning bar code symbol reading device of claim ~~27~~ 30, which further comprises a control subsystem disposed in said hand-supportable housing for enabling the transmission of produced symbol character data to ~~the~~ a associated host system or data storage device, only when ~~the~~ a data transmission control switch provided on the exterior of said hand-supportable housing is manually actuated by the user during a bar code symbol reading cycle.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The automatically-activated laser scanning bar code symbol reading device of claim 31, wherein the bar code symbol reading cycle is visually signaled to the user by a bar code symbol reading state indicator provided on the scanner housing.

Claims 33-39 (canceled)

Claim 40 (currently amended): An automatically-activated bar code reading device comprising:

a visible laser light source, scanning element and a plurality of stationary mirrors arranged in a first configuration and cooperating to produce a visible omni-directional ~~visible~~ laser scanning pattern having multiple laser scanning lines with substantially uniform spatial and temporal intensity characteristics at a given scanning plane parallel to a scanning window within ~~the~~ a working distance of said system; and

wherein said visible laser light source, said scanning element and said plurality of stationary mirrors arranged in a second configuration and cooperating to produce a visible stroboscopically-pulsed omni-directional laser scanning pattern against a single laser scanning line having substantially uniform spatial and temporal intensity characteristics at a given scanning plane parallel to said scanning window within the working distance of said system.

Claim 41 (currently amended): ~~An~~ The automatically-activated bar code reading system ~~comprising:~~ of claim 40, wherein ~~a~~ said visible laser light source, scanning element and ~~a~~ said plurality of stationary mirrors are arranged and cooperate to produce a visible stroboscopically-pulsed omni-directional laser scanning pattern against multiple rastered laser scanning lines having substantially uniform spatial and temporal intensity characteristics at a given scanning plane parallel to a scanning window within ~~the~~ a working distance of said system.

Claim 42 (currently amended): The automatically-activated bar code reading system of claim 41, wherein the pulse frequency and width ~~(e.g. duty cycle)~~ of ~~the~~ a visible laser light is dynamically-controlled to selectively enable the laser light source to produce a visible stroboscopically-pulsed omni-directional laser scanning pattern against a single laser scanning line having substantially uniform spatial and temporal intensity characteristics at a given scanning plane parallel to the scanning window within the working distance of said system, only

when the light produced therefrom is directed by said scanning element onto ~~the~~ a predetermined subset of stationary mirrors, to thereby support ~~the~~ a uni-directional bar code reading mode of operation~~, e.g. during bar code menu reading applications~~.

Claim 43 (currently amended): The automatically-activated bar code reading system of claim 41, wherein timing signals are derived and synchronized to a particular interval in ~~the~~ a rotation cycle of a rotating light directing element when the rotating light directing element directs light produced from the laser light source onto the predetermined subset of stationary mirrors.

Claim 44 (previously presented): The automatically-activated bar code reading system of claim 43, wherein such timing signals are derived from a position sensor integrated into a rotating portion of the rotating light directing element.

Claim 45 (currently amended): The automatically-activated bar code reading system of claim 43 that derives such timing signals a position indicating optical element mounted adjacent ~~(or near)~~ or near the perimeter of one of said stationary mirrors, such that the position indicating optical element is illuminated by light produced from said laser light source when the rotating light directing element reaches a predetermined point in its rotation.